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SUBJECT: SOMALIA: TALKING POINTS FOR UNSC JULY 29 BRIEFING  
AND CONSULTATIONS

¶1. USUN may draw from the talking points in paragraph 2 for the UN Security Council's July 29 briefing and consultations on Somalia.

¶2. Begin talking points:

-- Thank you, Mr. President. Let me thank Special Representative Ould-Abdallah for his briefing, and Omaar of Somalia for his informative update on the situation in Somalia.

-- The United States believes that the key to long-term peace and stability in Somalia lies in the establishment of effective governance based on a process of inclusive political dialogue and reconciliation between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and others committed to peace.

-- The United States condemns in the strongest terms the continuing military offensives against the TFG which are designed to undermine the TFG's legitimate authority under the Transitional Federal Charter by force. The international community must stand united with the TFG against the extremists who continue to sow violence in Somalia, including al-Shabaab and Hisb,ul Islam.

-- The United States further condemns al-Shabaab's July 20 raids and forced closure of the UNDP, UNDSS and UNPOS offices in Wajid and Baidoa, during which communications equipment, automobiles and supplies were looted, as well as its May 17 raid on the UNICEF compound in Jowhar town, which remains occupied by the militia. We strongly condemn all attacks upon AMISOM, including the heinous February 22nd al-Shabaab terrorist attack that killed 11 Burundian peacekeepers. In addition, AMISOM peacekeepers are constantly in danger of ambush and mortar attacks.

-- We are particularly concerned by the SRSG's reports that al-Shabaab is recruiting foreign fighters and collaborating with al-Qaeda to topple the TFG. In its drive to forcibly gain power, al-Shaabaab has even recruited Somali children to take up arms. They and other extremists have ratcheted up bomb attacks and augmented targeted assassinations to spread fear in a futile attempt to intimidate the Somali people into submission. The recent violence by extremists not only in Mogadishu, but also the renewed fighting in the central regions of Somalia is very troubling.

-- After two decades of fighting, the time has come to stop the cycle of violence in Somalia. We must not allow hardened terrorists the opportunity to overthrow the transitional government and use Somali territory as an incubator for future terrorist attacks. The current situation is a threat to the long-suffering people of Somalia, a threat to the region, and a threat to the world.

-- We echo the SRSG's call to donors for urgent military and financial support to the TFG and AMISOM. Supporting AMISOM should be central to the international community's strategy of stabilizing Mogadishu and supporting the Somali

peace process. The United States thanks AMISOM for its brave and critical work in the face of continuing assaults, and we urge donors to fulfill the pledges made at the April security conference in Brussels to address the continuing threat to regional stability posed by extremists. AMISOM remains well below its mandated force strength of 8,000. The United States urges the states of the African Union to contribute forces to the mission, and will support additional troop contributions approved by the AU.

-- We are deeply concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation in Somalia, including the estimated 200,000 people who had recently returned to Mogadishu, only to again be displaced when the fighting began anew. The violence makes critical food and other humanitarian assistance more challenging, and sometimes impossible, to distribute to the 3.2 million Somalis who require it. The United States deplores violence against humanitarian agencies and staff, in particular the May raid on the UNICEF compound which destroyed thousands of vaccines intended for Somali women and children; nutritional supplements intended for the most vulnerable women and children were also looted by al-Shabaab.

-- The United States is committed to addressing the humanitarian situation, and remains the largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, having provided nearly \$149 million in food and non-food emergency assistance

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since the start of our current fiscal year. We urge the international community to contribute to the Consolidated Appeal for Somalia. Contributions as of June 30 cover only 44 percent of the US\$ 984 million requested.

-- In spite of these challenges, the United States is encouraged by President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed's continuing efforts to reach out to opposition groups that wish to join the national reconciliation process, and we welcome the TFG's Declaration of Cooperation with the Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a. We also welcome the TFG's institution-building efforts, as well as steps taken to hold Parliamentary and Cabinet sessions despite increasing attacks in Mogadishu.

-- We remain deeply concerned by reports from the UNSC Somalia Sanctions Committee's Monitoring Group that Eritrea has provided funding, weapons, and training to armed insurgent groups operating in Somalia.

-- The United States has repeatedly expressed a willingness to engage the Eritrean government, should Eritrea cease its destabilizing activities in the Horn of Africa. We point out, however, that this opportunity for dialogue is not open-ended.

-- On piracy, we regret reports by the International Maritime Bureau that the rate of piracy incidents more than doubled in the first six months of 2009 compared to the same time last year. States affected by piracy, whether the state of flag registry, owner of vessels, or home of crew, should favorably consider prosecuting suspected pirates. Piracy is without question a symptom of as well as a contributing factor to the instability and insecurity in Somalia; without stability in Somalia, there can be no durable resolution of the piracy problem. We welcome efforts by naval coalitions to enhance the safety of shipping routes in the Gulf of Aden, which have contributed to a decrease in the rate of successful hijackings.

-- Paying ransom perpetuates acts of piracy. The United States does not offer concessions to hostage-takers, whether they are driven by political or financial motives. We encourage other states to take a similar position. We remain interested in forming a group of so called, "no concession" states to work together to slow the rise of piracy off the Somali coast.

-- We call on all Somali stakeholders to abide by the provisions of the Djibouti Agreement that led to the creation of the TFG and support its implementation. The people of Somalia have suffered for too long.

End Points.  
CLINTON